

Black & Pink

JULY 2014 NEWSPAPER

BLACK & PINK SINGS UP PENPALS AT THE PHILLY TRANS HEALTH CONFERENCE



Black and Pink Members Reed (Boston/Nola), Sasha (San Antonio), Rye (Boston,) and Kyem (Buffalo)

For the first time, Black & Pink had a table at the 13th Annual Philadelphia TransHealth Conference! Dozens of attendees stopped by and signed up to join Black & Pink at this conference. Black & Pink members from Boston, Buffalo, New Orleans, and San Antonio were on hand to discuss our organization and its goals, and to pair people up with trans people in prison seeking penpal friendships! We were joined by Sasha Taylor, formerly incarcerated in PA and now serving parole in San Antonio! Friday free world current chapters members met to get to know one another and talk about what chapter life is like.

UNDOCUMENTED, UNAFRAID AND UNASHAMED...

Zaraida "Ale" Reyes was a Dreamer. Additionally she was a transgender activist.



Her partially naked body was discovered on Thursday behind a Dairy Queen in Anaheim. She was 28. Zaraida was active with MEChA, El Movimiento

Estudiantil Chicanos de Aztlan, the Orange County Dream Team, DeColores Queer Orange County, and Familia. She was a member of a Latina transgender support group at The Center Orange County. She was born in Michoacan, Mexico and attended Century High School and Santa Ana College in Santa Ana. She became an activist when she began attending UC Santa Barbara. She was a gender studies major. She started organizing in 2007 and 2006 for the DREAM Act. She educated young people and adults about the importance about giving access to immigrants. Although authorities have not released a cause of death or called it a homicide, Orange County LGBT leaders are calling for an end to the hate crime violence. More than 100 people gathered in downtown Santa Ana on Friday evening to remember Zaraida. She was very passionate.

- It's a difficult day for all of us. --Rafael Solorzano, friend
- It is time for the entire community to stand with our trans sisters and brothers and stop this slaughter. --Kevin O'Grady, The Center OC
- We need to teach future generations how to love and respect people.--Patty Malagon
- We want people to celebrate her how she celebrated herself, as a woman --Solorzano
- This community is sort of in the shadows in many ways because of fear of interacting with the government as well as the public in general.
- We haven't heard enough facts to know [if it was a hate crime]. --Rusty Kennedy, OC Human Relations

Continued on Page 8...

¡EL PERIÓDICO DE BLACK AND PINK AHORA DISPONIBLE EN ESPAÑOL! / BLACK AND PINK NEWSPAPER NOW AVAILABLE IN SPANISH!

La policia, los tribunales, y el sistema de prisiones en los Estados Unidos acosan a gente de color, particularmente a gente negra, latín@, árabe, o indígena. Casi 1 al 3 de los prisioneros hablan español como lengua materna. Queremos que nuestro periódico sea lo más disponible posible para cualquiera persona quien quiera leerlo. Somos una familia más fuerte y unida cuando nos podemos entender los

unos a los otros
Por favor, avisen a todos sus amigos lesbiana, gay, bisexual, transgénero, o kuir/queer quisieran recibir un periódico en español. Pueden escribir a:

**Black and Pink - Spanish Newspaper
614 Columbia Rd.
Dorchester, MA 02125**

Please tell all your Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and/or Queer friends who would like a newspaper in Spanish to write to:
**Black and Pink - Spanish Newspaper
614 Columbia Rd.
Dorchester, MA 02125**

SEND US YOUR ART!

This month's header is by J.Damion, Texas!

Have your art featured in the Newspaper! We'll feature a different artist each month! Send us a drawing that says, "Black & Pink" or "Black and Pink" or "Poetry from the Heart" for the headers! Header art should be around the size of the newspaper header! Smaller or larger images may be resized to fit. You can send us other art too and we will include it on the poetry page.

Black and Pink
614 Columbia Rd
Dorchester, MA 02125

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Page 2

A Message from Jason
Let's Fight for Each Other
Free Issue of Prison Legal News

Page 3 and 4

Letters to Our Family

Page 5

Exposing Israel's Pinkwashing
New Documentary Out in the Night Asks: Who
Has the Right to Self Defense?

Page 6

Poetry from the Heart

Page 7

Family Feedback Summary
Out in the Night Continued
On the Inside Artwork Form
Family Feedback Form

Page 8

Write to Mia's Newsletter
LGBT Activist in 7-Inch Heels Blocks Traffic
Outside Immigration Detention Center
Addresses

Statement of Purpose

Black & Pink is an open family of LGBTQ prisoners and "free world" allies who support each other. Our work toward the abolition of the prison industrial complex is rooted in the experience of currently and formerly incarcerated people. We are outraged by the specific violence of the prison industrial complex against LGBTQ people, and respond through advocacy, education, direct service, and organizing.

Black & Pink is proudly a family of people of all races.

About this Newspaper

Since 2007, Black & Pink free world volunteers have pulled together a monthly newspaper primarily composed of material written by our family's incarcerated members. In response to letters we receive, more prisoners receive the newspaper each issue!

This month, the newspaper is being sent to: 5,470 prisoners!

Disclaimer:

Please note that the ideas and opinions expressed in the Black & Pink Newspaper are solely those of the authors and artists and do not necessarily reflect the views of Black & Pink. Black & Pink makes no representations as to the accuracy of any statements made in the Newspaper, including but not limited to legal and medical information. Authors and artists bear sole responsibility for their work. Everything published in the Newspaper is also on the internet—it can be seen by anyone with a computer. By sending a letter to "Newspaper Submissions," you are agreeing to have your piece in the Newspaper and on the internet. For this reason, we only publish First Names and State Location to respect people's privacy. Pieces may be edited to fit our anti-oppression values and based on our Editing Guidelines.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS TO HOT PINK!

Seeking erotic short stories, poems, AND ART by Black & Pink incarcerated and free-world family members for a new 'zine. To be mailed, art cannot include full nudity. Please send submissions (and shout outs to the authors from the first issue mailed in January!) addressed to Black & Pink - HOT PINK. This is a voluntary project, and no money will be offered for submissions, but you might get the chance to share your spicy story with many others! The zine will be sent 1-2 times per year. To subscribe to receive a copy of HOT PINK twice a year, write to our address, Black & Pink - GENERAL.

A MESSAGE FROM JASON

Dear friends,

Each July it is impossible to write an intro letter without talking about one of the most important speeches in history. On July 5, 1852 Frederick Douglass gave a speech titled, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" Frederick Douglass was a Black abolitionist who had escaped slavery and fought for the end of chattel slavery. Frederick Douglass organized with Black leaders and white leaders. He believed in many strategies for ending slavery, not restricted to only nonviolent means. It is important to hear his words 162 years later as we ask, "What to the Prisoner is the Fourth of July?"

The following paragraph comes from Frederick Douglass' speech. As you read it I want you to imagine he is speaking today. Can you hear the similarities between slavery and the US prison system? Can you hear his words speaking to you? How does your experience as a prisoner effect your understanding of the Fourth of July? How does your identity as a Black person, Latino/a person, Indigenous person, white person, Asian person, Arab person, or any other racial identity, affect how you hear these words? Frederick Douglass' words helped shape a generation of freedom fighters. What impact do you think his words can have today?

"Fellow-citizens; above your national, tumultuous joy, I hear the mournful wail of millions! whose chains, heavy and grievous yesterday, are, today, rendered more intolerable by the jubilee shouts that reach them. If I do forget, if I do not faithfully remember those bleeding children of sorrow this day, "may my right hand forget her cunning, and may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!" To forget them, to pass lightly over their wrongs, and to chime in with the popular theme, would be treason most scandalous and shocking, and would make me a reproach before God and the world. My subject, then fellow-citizens, is AMERICAN SLAVERY. I shall see, this day, and its popular characteristics, from the slave's point of view."

I was recently listening to an interview with someone who wrote a history book about the American Revolution. He talked about how the creation of what we now call the United States of America was founded on slavery. I learned that the British government, who controlled the US before the revolution, was beginning to outlaw slavery. Africans who were held in slavery began to align with the British government. There were already many, many slave revolts happening throughout the country. The white land owning colonists needed to make sure they held on to their power. They wanted to keep slavery going to have free labor. They wanted to continue controlling the land stolen from the Indigenous people. The Declaration of Independence is a document that celebrated white man land ownership. It was about keeping Black people in slavery. It was about continuing to steal land. So, what to the slave, the prisoner, to poor people, to Indigenous people is the Fourth of July?

Each Fourth of July I think about how incarceration is working in the United States. I think about how punishment controls the lives of many people, particularly poor people, people of color, LGBTQ people, people with disabilities. I try to imagine what a real revolution looks like that is directed by those who are most harmed by the systems of violence going on around us. I try to imagine what a real Declaration of Independence would look like. I wonder if rather than Independence we can fight together to recognize our interdependence. We all depend on one another to survive, to take care of our world, to nurture one another when we have been harmed, to hold each other accountable when we have harmed others. Each Fourth of July I like to imagine how things can be different. As Black and Pink continues to grow, as chapters expand on the inside and the outside of prison walls, as we continue to fight for each other and tell stories I wonder what our role is in the larger movement. What do you think?

So as we think, what to the prisoner is the fourth of July, let us do so remembering that once there were no prisons, that day will come again.

In loving solidarity,
Jason

LET'S FIGHT FOR EACH OTHER!

We've got over 5,000 people in prison reading our Newspaper. Do you have a problem that might get better if we send in a bunch of letters to the prison you're in?

- Give a short story of what happened, what you did to try and change it, and why it needs to be better
- Give a full name and address for who to address letters to: the warden, another administrator, etc. Letters need to go to someone else, not directly to you
- Give a few specific asks or demands that people can ask for in the letter they write for you
- Your letter won't be in the Newspaper for about 2-3 months after you send it, so make sure the information and demands will likely still make sense in 3+ months. If things change, send in an update
- Many of us know this very well already, but if the warden gets 75 letters about you (mostly from prisoners), they may retaliate against you, and make your situation worse. This is totally unjust, but it happens, so it may help to think about how a letter campaign could make your life better or worse.
- We won't be able to publish all requests.

Your letter could go like this:

Dear Family,

Help me out! On May X, 2014, I was sexually assaulted by a guard/put in an unsafe situation/denied medical care/put in solitary because I'm LGBTQ/whatever happened to you. I told this person, they didn't do anything, then I filed a grievance, and they ignored it. It's really unfair and unjust they did this to me/us!

Write to the Warden: Warden Smith, 100 Evil Prison Rd, Some City, USA.

This is what I need (examples):

- I need them to give me a cell mate who's not homophobic and/or transphobic
- I need them to give me this medical care
- I need them to allow me to write with my lawyer
- Whatever it is you need to make things better

Thanks Family!

XOXO,
Your Sibling

Let's use the power of our family to help each other out!

Send your request to our address with the top line: B&P- Newspaper Submission: Help Me Out!

FREE ISSUE OF PRISON LEGAL NEWS!

Black and Pink Members will be getting a FREE issue of Prison Legal News. Please note that this is a one time issue. To receive further issues you will have to subscribe.

Please also see this month's feedback question on when we should share the mailing list with others.

Dear Black & Pink,

Greetings to all of the Black & Pink family! Smile! I really love the writing from our community, it shows both good and bad things that us transwomen go through in men's prisons. So I give you all a shout out to my LGBT family, especially my sisters that continue to stand up and represent who they've become and are! Smile!

My name is Shyla, 43 years old, Native/Indian transwoman here in a California prison. I have a story of struggle, I have experienced first hand the discrimination/hatred while transitioning, from inmates and c/o's alike.

While at another CA prison, I got kicked out of the SHU and placed in Ad/Seg pending transfer in January 2013. I experienced sexual harassment by both inmates and staff alike, plus constantly getting my cell searched for "petty" contraband, "safety and security" were their reasons, but it was just an excuse to cover their asses. I was being subjected to "scapegoating," by inmates/staff blaming me for whatever--kites, stealing items off of lines, things like that! I even had c/o's hold, throw away, or deliver my mail to other inmates on purpose. These actions by inmates/staff put me in harm's way while on the walk alone cages on the yard. I had enough of the "shenanigans," so on January 1, 2014, I smashed my TV, boarded up, and dared for the c/o's to rush me, but that just resulted in me getting sprayed, which got me in the mental health crisis unit for homicidal/suicidal thoughts for a week. Thought the abuse would be over- no! It wasn't, far from it.

After being transferred, I never received any of my property when I was on the crisis unit, still waiting for an answer on that issue! While I was rehoused I got subjected to an assault by a c/o who placed me in the holding cage for being upset for missing an important committee. The c/o made an attempt for my hair tie- like really a hair tie can kill me while handcuffed. Seriously! I informed the c/o, "please don't touch my hair, let me take the ponytail out", and also I told him I'm an Indian transgender. The next thing I knew, I was in the air with his hand pulling my ponytail and his other hand grasping my throat. While I was on the ground (too shocked to say anything) the c/o was telling me in an angry/threatening voice- shut the f*** up or I'm going to kill you mothaf***er- while tightening his grip harder on my throat. Yes, it's been medically documented. The ace card in my hand.

On top of that, there's misconduct/falsified disciplinary reports and missing property. All these retaliation actions were probably to keep me silent since the c/o is well known and connected. Upon arrival at R&R at the prison I'm at now, I still didn't receive my personal property- letters from family, photos, artwork of mine, legal paperwork, books, Native books and art! Only thing I received was an old pair of tennis shoes, sweatshirt, and an envelope with recent mail. I'm appealing so we will see what happens.

Well, B&P family, that's my situation for being who I am, a beautiful N8V Transwoman! Smile! To my Sisters and Brothers, I thank you for your time, and no matter what I'll be standing tall, proud, and representing! Smile!

Sincerely,

Hi B&P Family,

I have been receiving our Newspapers since Sept 2013 and what Ms. Jenni Gann has done jumped out at me the most: she is in trouble and she gave all the necessary info so that Ms. Chelsy Baby could reach out as a Wisconsin Chapter of Black & Pink and let my voice be heard, combining it with that of B&P and my sister Jenni.

Faith without work is no good. As B&P family, when one calls, we all answer! That's how you show love for those you call family. You don't sit on your ass and do nothing. We are all one and the same! They hurt you, they hurt me. You have to do more than tell us what your issues are in our Newspaper. You have to do what Jenni did- tell us the sources so we as One Big B&P Family can join forces and let the prisons know that we are alive and actively standing as a true advocacy chapter! They will not hurt us if they hear from every member. If you're under attack, we're there! Wisconsin Chapter T-girl Chelsy Baby out.

Chelsy Baby, Wisconsin

Dear Black & Pink Family,

My name is Jim. I am a new member of the Black & Pink family, so new I haven't received my first copy of the Newspaper yet. I've been quite moved by the letters, I get a strong feeling that I need to be able to write to the person who's written that letter because I felt a connection just by reading the letter. Like the writer and I should be pen pals. But I don't know if it's possible to write people directly while I'm still here in prison?

I submitted my letter for the pen pal program, I have high hopes of finding a true friend who understands me, because finding true friends while locked up has proven to be difficult. There are too many people who only pretend to be a friend when their true interests or selfish agenda are completely different. Has anyone else in our family had that same or similar experience?

With all my love and high hopes,
Jimmy, Pennsylvania

My Brothers and Sisters-

Greetings to you all! I have some news that I wish to fill you all in on. In South Carolina the mental health inmates have brought a case before the court regarding the treatment of mental health inmates. The court found favor with the inmates! [Summary below] I bring this to the family as a small victory for us housed in the mental health program. I know that many transgender inmates are automatically put into a Dept of Corrections mental health program if they

are not immediately placed in protective custody (SHU).

While that win was good, it has spawned something even better- one of the SC Newspapers (Post and Courier, Charleston, SC) has done a sort of exposé on the mental health program in this state. Now the public is finally seeing what they are doing to us, and I hope and pray that more good will come of this. If you have access to read the report, I strongly encourage you to do so as you may notice similarities in your own prison. If there are, stand up and fight! We can win! Never forget that we are people too and we deserve just as much as anyone else.

A quote from the report claimed: "There is evidence that inmates have died from lack of basic treatment." We are living in the "New Asylums." Don't let anyone you know be next. We are important despite the mistakes we've made. We are loved. We are human! Stand up and fight, my brothers and sisters, for some of us we are all we have. Don't let them take away our family.

Always with Love,
Indy, South Carolina

Information from January 9, 2014 article by John Monk on Governing.com:

Judge Baxley ruled in January 2014 that the treatment given to South Carolina prison inmates suffering serious mental illness is so substandard that it's unconstitutional, it threatens the mental health of inmates, and it contributed to the deaths of multiple inmates in segregation.

The ruling resulted from a class action lawsuit originally filed in 2005. Several prison inmates identified only by their initials as well as a Columbia-based advocacy group -- Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities -- brought the lawsuit. In 2012, the case went to trial. Over five weeks, some 15 inmates and three experts testified for the plaintiffs. Judge Baxley gave the department -- the main defendant in the case -- 180 days to prepare a plan to remedy the situation. The S.C. Department of Corrections intends to appeal the

Dear Black & Pink,

Hello, I'm Ashley, one of several transgender inmates at my institution, a federal prison in Virginia. I am writing to share with everyone a long-awaited victory at our institution. After years of filing, and taking a case to court, four transgender inmates are now beginning hormone therapy, myself included! We consider this huge here because of their several years of repeated denials and stall tactics. I am also currently in litigation as to several issues, including the purchase and retention of female undergarments, purchase and retention of makeup through commissary or on SPO, and a prescription of Finasteride. One of the girls here is also battling for electrolysis. We all got started on 50mg of Spironolactone a day and 0.1 mg estrogen patches (Alora brand) twice a week. A couple of us have also seen victory in legally changing our names, myself included; now we are in the process of making it legal at our sentencing court and the BOP.

We want to publish this story to inspire everyone not to give up-- keep fighting; the war is far from over but this is a major battle won. Keep your heads up!

All my love,
Ashley, Virginia (Federal prison)

Dear Black & Pink,

Hello, my new family! Thank you so much for your wonderful and uplifting writing! I am a Gay inmate in a Pennsylvania prison, and have been having tons of issues with the guards and inmates. I am on the Restricted Housing Unit in a single cell with a camera watching/recording my every move 24/7. The prison officials claim it's for my own safety and the safety of this institution, but in reality it's retaliation and discrimination because I am HIV+. I'm being forced to wear a spit mask over my head, because the guards say that I'm a health risk, that they don't want me spitting on them, they are afraid of getting AIDS. I know saliva cannot carry the HIV virus, but this shows how ignorant the prison system is concerning LGBT and HIV/AIDS issues. Medical Dept refused to even acknowledge me. The prison doctor told me that the prison health care insurance plan does not pay for HIV antiviral medications, that I have to pay for the meds if I want them. Luckily, a friend in Utah, a Gay Mormon, who is rich, is paying for my HIV meds.

I want to respond to an article in the April 2014 issue by Chris. I too was molested and violently raped as a young child, by my aunt from age 5 to 9. I told a teacher, and my aunt went to trial, but I was threatened by family members, and so I denied everything in court. After this, the sexual abuse intensified 10X. There were other reports about my aunt, and she got away with it all. She has three kids of her own. Out of anger and hate, I molested her son. I am filled with severe shame and guilt and pain. I told a psychologist, and I just wrote a letter to Indiana County District Court giving my full confession.

I wrote to the Sex Abuse Treatment Alliance (SATA) requesting treatment, because I'm not getting it here. SATA works on issues of sexual abuse and its prevention, and runs "Sex Offenders Restored through Treatment (SORT), an outreach program for incarcerated abusers and their families. SORT works to promote restoration of people who have sexually offended by establishing alternatives to incarceration; and to foster a sense of community, responsibility, and concern between offenders nationwide through correspondence with people incarcerated for sex offenses and the SATA-SORT

LETTERS TO OUR FAMILY CONTINUED

Newsletter." Sex Abuse Treatment Alliance, P.O. Box 1022, Norman, OK 73070-1022.

For my brothers and sisters who are in Segregated Housing, Restricted Housing Units, and Solitary Confinement, here is a book to help: Survivors Manual: Surviving in Solitary, a manual written by and for people living in control units, created by the American Friends Service Committee. This book is the prison segregation victim's BIBLE. Write for a free copy: AFSC Prison Watch Project, 89 Market Street, 6th floor, Newark, NJ, 07102. (Also available for \$3 plus \$3.50 shipping at Quaker Books of Friends General Conference, 1216 Arch St. #2B, Philadelphia, PA 19107. And for free online at <http://www.afsc.org/story/survivors-manual-those-suffering-solitary>)

As Human beings, we need nurture and some type of Spirituality. For non-discriminatory interfaith spiritual help, write Human Kindness Foundation- Prison Ashram Project, PO Box 61619, Durham, NC 27715. They provide free books, usually written by the late Bo Lozoff, and a free newsletter. HKF changed my life.

We need to make a change to the laws governing LGTBQ rights and LGBTQ prison issues. There is an old saying- if not me, Who? If not now, When? If we all work together, and fight this oppressive system, victory will be ours! I have strong faith that soon We Shall Be Free!!

Well, family, I must say goodbye for now. I love you all! Peace out Family, my Peeps.
Your Brother,
Tom aka Gizmo, Pennsylvania

Dear Black & Pink Family,

I don't know about other states, but Kansas has found yet another way to wage war on the poor, and those who must register as either "violent offenders" or "sex offenders." This is how:

In a time when jobs are hard to find, the cost of everything is skyrocketing, and buying health insurance is mandatory, offenders who must register must do so every 3 months in person beginning with your birthday month and you must pay \$25.00 each time. Failure to pay is failing to register. The first failure is a Level 6 Person Felony (40/43/46 months), 2nd time is a Level 5 Person Felony (122/130/136 months), and a 3rd or subsequent failure is Level 3 Person Felony (221/233/247 months), PLUS 24-36 months post release/parole terms each time.

Such offenders, even if no longer on parole, must now pay the state per this "non-punitive" law to remain "free"- they must literally pay for the "right" to be free/at liberty, or return to prison!

How is this even legal? I tried to seek the ACLU in our region to challenge this via a class action. And though such "conditions" by necessity only apply to those out of prison, they declined to help saying that this is a matter of "conditions of confinement" and they do not take such cases.

How much longer until such conditions are made for all citizen to remain free? And I think we are being made into criminals by the Affordable Care Act/Obamacare, because we are penalized if we can't afford insurance. What's next?

Freedom must be fought for- that's a given. But should any citizen, especially those not on parole/probation in the community, pay a fee to the state monthly, quarterly, yearly, etc, to remain free?

Legalize Freedom!

Dear Black & Pink Family,

As a Muslim in the Deen of Islam I greet my fellow brothers and sisters with, As-Salam Alaykum. So let me say the same to you. Insh-Allah (God willing) this letter will come out and find you well. Now let me tell you who I am. My name is Anthony and I'm a Bi-sexual Muslim.

Being 4 years away from being released on a 18 year bit for second degree murder has given me time to think. And I have come to the conclusion that there needs to be a safe place for our community- LGBTQ- to go once we're released from prison. And I come up with a Mosque plus halfway house. Because we need a place of our own where we can get the prison life off us. Where we can be us 100%. Without someone trying to rape us or abuse us mentally, emotionally, etc.

My heart goes out to everyone who's been in SMU, SHU, PC, or whatever they call it there in your state. No one should be abused by staff or inmates! So arm yourself with the 1983 [legal code] and learn to understand it. Also get The Jailhouse Lawyer's Handbook: Mail \$2.00 in money order, check, or stamps to: National Lawyers Guild, 132 Nassau Street, Rm 922, New York, NY 10038.

You can also get the Georgetown Law Journal, Annual Review of Criminal Procedure, 40th Edition if you're indigent [website says \$15 check or money order payable to Georgetown Law ARC, write to Georgetown Law CLE/ARCP | 600 New Jersey Avenue NW | Washington, DC 20001-2075]. And the National Prisoner Resource List is available for free from The Prison Book Program, 1306 Hancock Street, Suite 100, Quincy, MA 02169.

Here is some legal case law. In my 1983 Federal lawsuit I quoted:

-Smith vs. Marcan, 910 F.2d 500, 501 (8th Cir. 1990): "Prisoner's right to be protected from harm by other prisoners is beyond disputable."
-Farmer vs. Brennan, 511 U.S. 825, 837 (1994): "Deliberate indifference is shown by staff knew of substantial risk and failing to act to avoid it."
-Flanders vs. Maricopa County, 203 Ariz. 368, 51 P.3d 837 (App. Div. 1-2002): "Prison officials showed deliberate indifference to inmates safety is satisfied

when officer was aware of facts from which one can infer that substantial risk of serious harm exist and in fact, drew the inference and then is liable for failing to take reasonable measures to guarantee inmates safety."

-Coldwell vs. Miller, 790 F.2d 589 (7th Cir. 1986): "It is firmly established that an inmate has the right to expect prison officials to follow its policies and regulations."

-Montilla Vs. I.N.S., 926 F.2d 162, 167 (2nd Cir. 1991)

-Morta vs. Ruiz 415 U.S. 199 (1974): "When the rights of individuals are affected, it is incumbent upon agencies to follow their own procedures. This principle of law has been held to apply to prison as well."

Before quoting a case, be sure to read the whole case, because it could end up hurting you. I am not a lawyer but I am someone that just won't allow any prison system to walk all over me. You shouldn't either! You may not win all the time, but you can't win if you don't fight.

This community has more power than we realize. I feel like the cases winning more in the courts are rights for the LGBT community and for Muslims. Across the country the prison system has become it's own worst enemy. Guys and girls, do not expect less when you are worth so much more! Insh-Allah I'll see you again in the free world. Sept 9, 2018 DOC must release my body, however my mind is already free. I love you all and pray to Allah (God) to make your way easy and fruitful.

Anthony, Arizona

UPDATE FROM BLACK AND PINK CALIFORNIA PRISON CHAPTER

Dear Family,

I welcome you all with great love and respect, with all my heart.

Enclosed in an update on the Black & Pink California Prison Chapter. We are making great progress for our LBGTQ family, and we encourage our "free world" allies in the San Francisco and San Diego chapters to please contact us. We need your valuable input and support to continue building our family inside and outside the walls.

I am currently in solitary confinement ("Ad-Seg") for alleged "battery on inmate," and most likely will be transferred to SHU in another prison. However, the struggle to abolish control unit torture will simply be added to our list of current projects.

On another note, I have an administrative appeal ("602") pending concerning the California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation (CDCR) blanket ban policy against sex-reassignment surgery (SRS). I recently had a psychiatric evaluation and recommendations of eligibility and readiness for genital surgery, so we'll soon see how that plays out. I am asking that this outdated and discriminatory CDCR policy be repealed (California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 15, sec. 3350.1 (b)(1) & (2).) I may soon join our sisters Michelle Kosilek and Ophelia De'Lonta in their federal civil rights legal struggle be filing a lawsuit of my own! :) We demand an end to discrimination! We demand adequate transition-related medical care for trans-prisoners!

We can't stop! And we won't stop! We are women on the rise!
In Struggle, XOXO,

Jennifer aka Baby Girl, Black & Pink California Prison Chapter

Current Projects of our Black & Pink chapter include:

- Advocacy Campaign for Trans-Women (ACT!). We are filing "602" administrative appeals and citizen's complaints concerning gender discrimination, sexual abuse, and deliberate indifference to our personal safety/medical needs, etc.
- Establishing chapter coordinators at each prison facility within the California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation (CDCR). They will hold meetings on the yard whenever possible.

Hey Fam,

First of all, I send my love and respects to everyone in Black & Pink for standing on the front line in this war. My name is Nina, I'm a 42 year old MTF transwoman locked up on a level 4 yard in California. As I navigate my way through these prisons, I remain unbowed. My oppressors as well as those inmates who dislike "my kind" because their minds are unable to process and accept what a new age woman looks and sounds like aren't of real concern to me. My focus remains on a better tomorrow for our family.

It doesn't matter what state you're imprisoned in or the color of your skin, if you are LGBTQ you have an obligation to embrace your family with everything that's good in you. We are a fractured community in most cases behind these walls. I hear so many stories of heartache, loneliness, and abuse that never seem to end with a mention of support. So I challenge any and everyone who is reading this. Find peace and comfort with those who are LGBTQ in your prison, embrace them and help each other with your struggles. Only then will we define the meaning of family. If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem. I promise you this, if you decide to rise above, you'll be surprised how transparent and trivial our problems with each other are. It's not a bad thing to love your family.

Holla,
Nina, California

STRUGGLING FOR RIGHTS! EXPOSING ISRAEL'S 'PINKWASHING'

Pinkwashing is the word activists use to describe Israel's branding of itself as the gay oasis of the Middle East. It's a government-supported public relations strategy, they say, designed to help us all forget about Israel's occupation of Palestine. These activists are part of a growing movement of anti-pinkwashers, committed to exposing Israel's pro-gay messaging as cynical propaganda, while at the same time bringing more attention to what many have labeled as Israeli apartheid.

"There's a really strong current all over the globe" of queer Palestinian human rights activism, said 26-year-old organizer Selma Al-Aswad. "It's a current that I didn't feel in my early days of organizing Palestine solidarity work. That was an isolated experience, and I do not feel that isolation anymore."

LGBTQ people in Palestine with groups like al-Qaws are actively trying to dispel the myth that Palestinian queers are interested in being "rescued" and integrated into Israeli society, and advocates for Palestinians around the world are forwarding the idea that gay tolerance, like allowing gays to openly serve in the country's conscripted military, doesn't excuse Israel's human rights violations. Meanwhile, in Israel's supposed gay mecca of Tel Aviv, violence against queer people persists [...]

Another well-known gay event held every June is the Frameline LGBT film festival in San Francisco. Advertising itself as the largest and longest-running LGBT cultural event in the world, the festival is sponsored in part by the Israeli consulate. A growing list of artists and filmmakers — including John Greyson, who was famously detained in Egypt for several months last year, author Alice Walker and former political prisoner Angela Davis — have either pulled their films or called for "discontinuing its financial relationship with the state of Israel." So far, however, the festival's leadership has refused to cut ties with the consulate. (In 2011, leaked emails revealed a collaborative effort between Frameline, the Israeli consulate and programs within the Jewish Community Federation of San Francisco to thwart protests.)

Kate Raphael has been organizing against pinkwashing as part of the majority-Jewish group Queers Undermining Israeli Terrorism in San Francisco



The radical arts collective Street Cred in San Francisco remixed this advertisement for 2013 Frameline Film Festival. (WNV/Street Cred)

since the early 2000s. In May, the group picketed Frameline's press briefing "It infuriates me that they're allowing our identity to be co-opted," she said. "I don't know any other way to say it than if someone is going to speak in your name, and what they say is abhorrent to you, you just have no choice [but to fight back]." [...]

After many years of organizing, mainstream media like The New York Times have run articles on pinkwashing, bringing the concept to a mainstream audience. A widely publicized academic conference on pinkwashing was held in New York City last year. Israel's publicity blitz continues, though, particularly with respect to gay tourism; its Gay Tel Aviv campaign launched with a huge government investment of close to \$90 million four years ago.

"In a lot of ways I think that Israel's use of pinkwashing, and really trying to get at this niche community, if you will, speaks to the success [of anti-pinkwashing activism]," Al-Aswad said with hope and excitement in her voice. "This is happening all over. It shows you how threatened the powers that be are with losing legitimacy, and losing support."

Originally Published on Waging Nonviolence by Toshio Meronek

NEW DOCUMENTARY "OUT IN THE NIGHT" ASKS: WHO HAS THE RIGHT TO SELF DEFENSE?

Page 5

Who has the right to self-defense? How do race, class, sexuality, and gender expression affect what our society sees as violent? In 75 minutes, new documentary Out in the Night challenges us to consider these questions.

The film follows the case of Venice Brown, Terrain Dandridge, Renata Hill and Patreese Johnson, four women who became known as the New Jersey Four after they defended themselves against an assault on the streets of New York City's West Village.

On August 18, 2006, seven young black lesbians friends from Newark, New Jersey, came to New York City's West Village. As they walked down the street, they were harassed by a man named Duane Buckle. When they told him they were gay, he began threatening to rape them—then he physically attacking them, throwing his lit cigarette at them, ripping the hair from one woman's head, and choking another woman. The women defended themselves and, at some point during the four-minute fight, two unknown men jumped in to assist them. As Buckle attempted to choke Renata Hill, Patreese Johnson stabbed him with a pen knife. The two unknown men left the scene, but when police arrived, they arrested the women. Buckle was taken to the hospital where he stated that men had attacked him. Nonetheless, the women were charged with assault and attempted murder.

Both the media and the prosecution framed the women as a "lesbian wolf pack," "killer lesbians" and a "seething sapphic septet" who had attacked Buckle because he was straight.

Media and prosecution also played on racialized fears of gang violence: although none of the women had ever been in conflict with the law, media and prosecutors described them as a "gang." In the courtroom, neither the judge nor the prosecutor differentiated between the charge of "gang assault" (two or more people acting in concert to cause injury) and actual gang membership. Three of the women accepted plea bargains and served six months; the remaining four fought the charges. They were convicted and received sentences ranging from three-and-a-half to 11 years in prison.

But Out in the Night, which crowdfunded its production budget and is now currently screening at film festivals, isn't just a recap of what happened that night, the ensuing media sensationalism, and the women's legal cases. Weaving in interviews with family members, attorneys, police officers, and the women themselves, filmmaker blair dorosh-walther paints a complex picture which also looks at race, class, sexual orientation, and gender expression. "I initially was going to focus on self-defense for women," says dorosh-walther. "Then it became about the media analysis—why they were labeled the way they were. As I continued shooting, it became more and more about the women and talking about these issues through them."

The film counters these one-dimensional headlines, humanizing the four women by delving into their lives, families, and communities. We see all four women at a birthday party surrounded by family members of all ages. Patreese's brother Anthony notes that, for many of them, their great-grandmothers or grandmothers originally bought the house in which generations have grown up. But, while Newark was home to generations, streets still held the threat of violence. Anthony recalls urging his sister to carry a knife for her own protection.

Anthony and his sister Tanisha recount Patreese coming out to their family. For Patreese's family—and for the families of the other women—their sexual orientation was no big deal, but not everyone on the streets of Newark was as accepting. Walking down the streets of Newark as a masculine-appearing lesbian drew whispers if not threats of (or actual) violence. The West Village, with its reputation as a destination for gay people, seemed like a safe haven.

"I wanted to go to the Village cuz it's nothing but gay people," Renata stated early in the film. "We thought we wouldn't have a problem if we went to New York. We could just be ourselves," she recalled. But, interjects Terrain, the Village is where violence—both interpersonal and state—happened to them.

The film follows the women and their family members as they serve their prison sentences. In doing so, Out in the Night subtly but deftly includes information about the effects of incarceration, from the policing of gender behavior to prison's impact on family members. Behind bars, Renata reveals ways in which the prison system polices gender. Even the underwear incarcerated people wear is tightly controlled. "I miss having boxers," she tells the camera frankly. "These panties are killing me."

The film also shows how incarceration disrupts family ties. The film follows Terrain's mother as she leaves her home in Newark to catch the 9:30 pm bus at Columbus Circle to travel 371 miles to Albion Correctional Facility, 48 miles from the Canadian border. She takes this overnight bus ride every other week to spend a few hours with her daughter.

Distance is only one way in which incarceration attempts to sever family connections. Renata's son was five years old when she was arrested in 2006. While in prison, she attempted to call her son and learned that the State of New Jersey had taken custody of her him. She was no longer allowed to speak with him and was not granted permission to see him until 2009. In another phone call home, Renata learned of her mother's death. She was not allowed to attend the funeral. Less than a year before her release, Patreese's brother Anthony (interviewed throughout the documentary) was shot and killed in front of his own house.

Continued on Page 5

THE LAND ACROSS THE SEA

In my darkest hour to you I call
deathly afraid that I will fall
though my voice you do not hear
despite the call, so clear.
Across the sea you stand
in a land- without time.

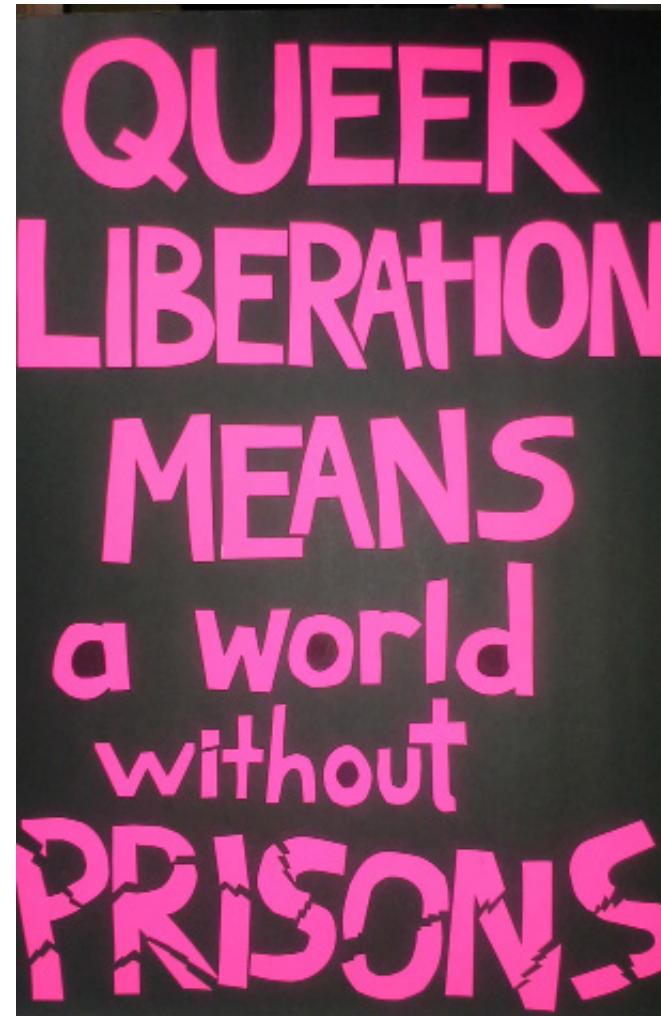
How I long to be at your side
But the Ferrymaster- he has died.
I try to swim to the neverland
yet I know my arms will fail my command
If my wings were clipped not
the embers of our love would burn white hot.

But this Land across the Sea
Forever keeps you from me.

Indy, South Carolina

FOREVER AND A DAY

Where does one search to find true love,
and not the kind that's fake...
I prefer the one that gives,
instead of the kind that takes.
Most choose to accept the bitter-n-sweet,
well, I disagree to our higher power,
because I believe that once you mesh the
two,
You're left with something sour.
I need someone hard, yet gentle,
somebody which I can hold tight,
through those hot summer days,
and all those cold winter nights.
For God knows my heart,
how I've looked high & low,
for that warm and comfortable feeling,
and that spark and glow.
So, these are a few of my expectations,
expressed through the form of a poem,
and if that special someone is out there,
please let your presence be known.
I'm looking for a soul-mate,
in whom I can consider my friend,
a person I'm able to learn & grow with,
from now until the end.
So if you could hear me out there,
and understand everything I had to say,
journey with me forever,
as we pray for one more day.



Sign by Black and Pink: Chicago

DAY DREAMING

The multitude of thoughts!
Where will the actions lead me?
 So many dreams!
Will I ever make them a reality?
 So many emotions!
Will I ultimately be denied the true desires of my heart?
 So much pain!
Do the scars last forever?
 So many tears!
Will they ever stop flowing?
 So many hurt!
Is there a cure?
 So many minutes
So many hours
 So many years
Spent in the abyss
 Searching for a route
That will lead me to the heavens
 So many memories
Some I wish to forget
 Some I want to relive

Mario, Texas

WHERE OR WHEN

When you're awake
The thing you think comes from the dreams you
dream.
Thought has wings,
And lots of things are seldom what they seem.
Sometimes you think you've lived before
All that you live today.
Things you do come back to you,
As though they know the way.
Oh, the tricks your mind can play.

It seems we stood and talked like this before.
We looked at each other in the same way then,
But I can't remember where or when.
The clothes you're wearing are the clothes you wore.
The smile you are smiling you were smiling then,
But I can't remember where or when.

Some things that happen for the first time,
Seem to be happening again.
And so it seems that we have met before,
And laughed before,
And loved before,
But who knows where or when.

Raven, Ohio

I AM WHO I ALWAYS WAS

They, they, they, they
always love to say
Oh Him, He's Gay
like that's all there is to me...so
 was I gay before I was,
Or was,
before I was gay?

Well then, what is it to be gay?
Guys with limp wrists
walking with a twist
talking with a lisp
All prim & proper
toned up & tanned copper
with dance moves as smooth as a helicopter
Dressed in loud colorful Flamingo shirts
always a flirt
scared of grease & dirt...
Well then, that's not me, not me
cuz I'm ghetto & grimy
Dickies & Reeboks
Not straight, but str8t off them dirty Southside blocks
skipped a lot of school
So I'm an undereducated fool
Hard to the core
Knuckles up & scarred from street wars
Been beat & broken to the floor
But nothing down there, so I never stayed down there

I am never scared
to speak my mind
even when it may not be in my best interests sometimes
So yo, f*** society's easy labels
& let's turn the tables
cuz I am-
way more than just a man who loves another man
I am down for the struggle & I'm thuggin'
While Angels & Demons are tuggin'
on my broken heart strings
I am another lover's sweet dreams
I am a dad, sister, mother, brother, &
brother I never looked good in colorful shirts of Flamingo
never spoke with any lispy lingo
my dance moves suck crazy
& I'm lazy
except when I'm not
not scared to be an outcast
cuz I'm never out classed
so ya'll, f*** 'em if they judge
& by all rights it is all right for us to hold a grudge
But baby, never budge
From who you always was

Charlemagne, Texas

We have made changes, and will be making some more, based on your Feedback about the Newspaper from Summer 2013. What do you think of our Guidelines for creating and editing the B&P Newspaper? What would you change? Anything to add? Thanks for your insightful suggestions! Sample responses (out of 19 responses so far):

“My only critique is: Maybe a few more stories from outside environment which could inspire hope to those of us locked up.”

“Put together a list of incarcerated members who can receive inmate-to-inmate mail. This would allow incarcerated members to communicate better. This list could be mailed to inmates upon request. All of Wisconsin can get inmate-to-inmate mail.”

“I would add the option of allowing full name and prison number and facility address when requested by submitting inmate to allow for input/feedback and adding a line “No prisoner correspondence” OR “Correspondence accepted”. Add an 8.5x11 enclosure rather than rip-out strips- some of us would like to keep our issues whole - prison demands them thrown out if altered.”

“You’re doing the best with what you have. I agree with the guidelines you have in place. I like the idea of a regular columnist. I would also suggest a regular artist.”

“I like all the new changes, however I feel for the newsletter to be more successful and have a better overall point each month you all should have a topic like in a real magazine. ... At this point it’s a lot of information and it’s good, but it doesn’t flow as smoothly as it could. I also think it would be cool to have more pictures of the volunteers who help put it work!”

“Add a section that addresses trans issues or for those just finding out who they are and want to know how to dress, put on makeup, the medical cost for shots or pill hormone treatments, and for the cost of a S.R.S. and who are the best doctors in that field.”

ON THE INSIDE ARTWORK FORM

Black & Pink is facilitating the revival of the art program in a new way, called On the Inside! If you are an artist, here's how it will work. Create any artwork that you would like (drawings, cards, paintings). We are seeking art drawn in ball point pen or pencil on letter-sized copy paper. The exhibit is taking shape along the following themes: portraits, self-portraits, spirituality, erotic, love, advocacy, gender, pop culture, celebrities, sports cars, crime & punishment, and prison life. Some of the artwork will be accepted for an upcoming exhibit; the artist will be promptly compensated \$50 for all accepted artwork (except \$10 for cards) and postage expenses incurred. Any artwork that isn't accepted for the exhibit for any reason will be promptly returned to the artist, or other address. If your artwork is accepted for the Exhibition, you assign all right, title and interest in the work to us (in other words you transfer ownership of the art and its copyrights to the Exhibit coordinators) as consideration for participation in the show. The artwork will never be resold, and will likely be donated to an LGBTQ Archive in years to come. **Please do not write your name and number anywhere on the front of the artwork to protect your privacy. We are all excited to see what you create! Please fill out a questions 1 through 6 once, and questions 7 through 10 on separate slip like this for each piece of artwork you submit. Please mail the artwork with the information below on slips to:**

On the Inside, PO Box 173, 2658 Griffith Park Blvd. , Los Angeles, CA 90039

1)Your preferred name for the exhibit. We will only include the first initial of your last name in the exhibit.

2)Your gender pronouns (eg. she / he / xe / they).

3)How do you identify? (Optional: gender, sexuality, race, age).

4)Your legal name, number, and mailing address.

5)If my artwork is not accepted for the exhibit:

Send it to my address (please list)

Send it to another address (please list)

Black & Pink can keep and display it

6)Preferred method of compensation:

Donation into commissary account (Please include deposit slips or instructions):

Magazines/books (Details)

Other:

7)Title of artwork (for display at exhibit).

8)Description of artwork (for display at exhibit).

9)Anything else you'd like the exhibit curator to know about the artwork or about yourself which can be shared / feel free to write on another page, and please note that the exhibit curator is not able to be a penpal):

BLACK & PINK INCARCERATED FAMILY FEEDBACK! MAIL TO: Black & Pink - FEEDBACK Dorchester, MA 02125

rip slip here

Black and Pink free world organizers are occasionally approached with requests to share our mailing list. For example, Prison Legal News offered to send one free issue to each member of Black and Pink member. How should Black and Pink decide when to give out members' addresses for this type of opportunity?

What would you like to see included in a privacy policy for our mailing list? _____

“OUT IN THE NIGHT” CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Page 7

The film also shows how incarceration disrupts family ties. The film follows Terrain's mother as she leaves her home in Newark to catch the 9:30 pm bus at Columbus Circle to travel 371 miles to Albion Correctional Facility, 48 miles from the Canadian border. She takes this overnight bus ride every other week to spend a few hours with her daughter.

Distance is only one way in which incarceration attempts to sever family connections. Renata's son was five years old when she was arrested in 2006. While in prison, she attempted to call her son and learned that the State of New Jersey had taken custody of her him. She was no longer allowed to speak with him and was not granted permission to see him until 2009. In another phone call home, Renata learned of her mother's death. She was not allowed to attend the funeral. Less than a year before her release, Patreese's brother Anthony (interviewed throughout the documentary) was shot and killed in front of his own house.

“Self-defense will never work if we’re not considering the entire context and what people have gone through,” stated dorosh-walther, noting that their prosecution—and mainstream media treatment—often ignored the women’s multiple identities. “They’re no less black than they are lesbian, gender non-conforming, working class or poor. Their case is the perfect storm of injustice. But we need to figure out how to write about these intersectionalities.”

Out in the Night ends with as Patreese Johnson, the last of the four women to be released, walks away from the prison and into the arms of her waiting sister. But, while Patreese, Renata, Terrain and Venice are out of prison, countless other women with similar stories remain behind prison walls. Out in the Night challenges viewers to care about their stories--and then to take action.

The film challenges viewers to think about their experiences. Hopefully it will also challenge them to take action as well.

Originally Published on *Bitch Magazine* by Victoria Law

WRITE TO MIA'S NEW NEWSLETTER

There are generally overlooked portions of society, and these portions are larger than we think and far more important than we realize. Those of us in the LGBTQ community experiencing addiction, aging, or mental illness quite possibly cover a large portion of the community as a whole. Feeling alone and possibly left out, individuals have fewer opportunities to speak out. I personally face getting older and having Bipolar Disorder. Identifying as LGBTQ and being branded with mental illness stigma is often frustrating and confusing. On the one hand we are seen as different and outcasts due to our natural orientations, then we are judged due to the illnesses we have and the unfortunate addictions we have grown into. Many times these circumstances have caused us to be locked away or further cast aside by even family.

This is not intended to sound preachy, but it is a call to action: We must, as a community, reach out to the people who are suffering and lend our own hands of support. Those struggling with mental illness, addiction, and/or aging have not been cast out of our hearts, minds, or lives. We must offer a place where we can go to share an experience, a recovery story, or even a community complaint.

I remember the first LGBTQ magazine subscription I ordered, I was 35 years old, which is relatively young but old enough to know better. I got the magazine and to my dismay and amazement, every other page was an ad or picture of a well intoxicated person barely 20 years old. They were all well-exercised, tanned, and having a great time without a care in the world; how I envied them.

As an Afro-American Trans-woman in my middle age, and with my own issues, I closed the magazine feeling left out and rather annoyed. It was at this point that I decided that I will not feel sorry for myself, nor will I become a victim of my own circumstances. I will accept that I am mentally ill, I will accept the blessing that I am getting older, and I will encourage others to revel in their own personal acceptance and self love.

I have been in recovery for almost 20 years after committing a violent crime in the height of my illness and gender distress. I was blessed enough to be sent to a hospital long term, as opposed to a jail. This should have been the start of my treatment, but my recovery started only a short while ago. Once I was able to move on from just feeling like a victim, I was able to start to feel healthy and empowered.

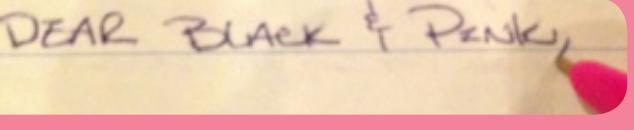
At this point, I am reaching out to others through the wonderful Black & Pink family. I dream of a newsletter that will allow the members of our community that face issues like aging, mental illness, and/or addiction to speak out, and through helping others, help ourselves. Are you sitting there reading this and thinking to yourself, "This applies to me," "I can relate to this," or "I know someone who this would apply to"? If so, send us your stories, your ideas, and your thoughts, we truly value all of your criticism and encouragement.

How has your recovery process been? Has your road been smooth or has it had bumps and bruises? Have you gotten older and found that clubs are not your thing? Do you disagree completely and you have an opinion much different than mine? Either way, I would love to hear from you, and possibly share what you have to say. Be sure to include whether you want to share your thoughts with others. Hope to hear from you soon! Write me at:

Mia Kobi Burks
750 South State St
Elgin, IL 60123
With Love and Solidarity,
Mia, Illinois

ADDRESSES: PLEASE NOTE OUR NEW ADDRESSES FOR MAIL!

Please Note: You can send multiple requests/topics in one envelope! Due to concerns about consent and confidentiality, you cannot sign up other people for the newspaper. However, we can accept requests from multiple people in the same envelope. There's no need to send separate requests in more than one envelope. If you are being released and would still like to receive a copy of the newspaper, please let us know the address we can send the newspaper to!

	Black & Pink - _____ 614 Columbia Rd Dorchester, MA 02125
If you would like to request:	Please write one or more of these topics in the top line of the address:
Newspaper Subscriptions, Pen-Pal Program, Address Change, Request Erotica, Religious Support & Volunteering (Send thank you cards to donors, etc.)	Black & Pink - General
Newspaper Submissions- Stories, Articles, Poems & Art	Black & Pink - Newspaper Submissions
Black & Pink Organization Feedback- Especially the slip on Page 7	Black & Pink - Feedback
Advocacy Requests- Include details about situation and thoughts about how calls or letters might help	Black & Pink - Advocacy
Submit to Erotica Zine	Black & Pink - HOT PINK
Stop Your Newspaper Subscription	Black & Pink - STOP Subscription

Pen Pal Program: LGBTQ prisoners can list their information and short non-sexual ad on the internet where free world people can see it and decide to write. There will be a Pen-Pal Request Form in the Newspaper every 4 months.

UNDOCUMENTED, UNAFRAID AND UNASHAMED... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



- Those of you who knew Zoraida know that she was a loving girl, one that was always calm, a bit shy and wore a smile in her face when surrounded by loved ones. She was always sweet and willing to help in any way that she could.--Facebook
- I remember her as a young passionate human being, she was learning new things, about being transgender, Chicano, and an immigrant youth. I remember our struggle as undocumented students and moments of excitement about fighting for our rights and pushing through to keep hope alive, especially our hope for a better future. -Francisco Bravo, who first met Zoraida in 2004 at Santa Ana College

- I will forever hold you very dearly. The strong MUJER that you were, the leader, the activist, the vocal translation are all examples to follow. Amiga! all the people that had the opportunity to meet you are celebrating today your life! We will continue your fight, OUR fight! with the love and passion that you always did. --Luis Ramirez

LGBT ACTIVIST IN 7-INCH HEELS BLOCKS TRAFFIC OUTSIDE IMMIGRATION DETENTION CENTER

Five trans and queer immigrant activists were arrested on Tuesday morning after blocking an intersection in front of the Santa Ana City Jail for more than an hour. The activists chained themselves to a metal cage to call attention to the city of Santa Ana's contract with federal immigration authorities, which organizers say "imprisons trans and queer people in abusive conditions."

The Santa Ana Jail opened in 1997 and was targeted by the activists because it has contracts with the U.S. Marshals Service and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

"We came together to fight for marriage and now are leaving our immigrant brothers and sisters behind," said Laura Kenter, 50, who was arrested Tuesday. "The progress of the LGBT struggle for equality, including marriage, is meaningless until every person is seen as fully human and treated with dignity and respect."

Among those arrested was Ramiro Alexis Gonzalez, 21, who wore 7-inch heels to the protest, a fashion choice intended to be a political statement.

"The protest was about raising visibility of our LGBT community and this just felt like the right outfit," Gonzalez told Fusion. "Heels have been a staple in my closet since high school and it's my way of expressing my gender identity and my way of challenging the norm and queering things." The protest was organized by the National Queer Trans Latino Alliance and FAMILIA: Trans Queer Liberation Movement.

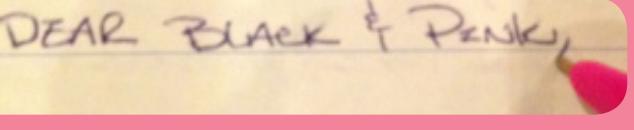
There at least 267,000 LGBT undocumented immigrants living in the U.S., according to a 2013 study by the Williams Institute at UCLA. Relative to all undocumented immigrants, LGBT undocumented immigrants are more likely to be male and are younger. About 71 percent of undocumented LGBT adults in the U.S. are Latino and 15 percent are Asian or Pacific Islanders.

All five arrestees were bailed out of jail by Tuesday evening, according to the Santa Ana Police Department.

Originally Published on *Fusion* by Jorge Rivas

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